NEWPORT BEACH ZONING ADMINISTRATOR MINUTES
Council Chambers – 3300 Newport Boulevard
Wednesday, May 9, 2012
REGULAR HEARING
3:30 p.m.

1.   **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

        Staff Present: Brenda Wisneski, Zoning Administrator
                                Javier S. Garcia, AICP, Senior Planner

2.   **MINUTES** of April 25, 2012

Action: Approved

3.   **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

ITEM NO. 1   Newport Place Shopping Center Sign Program – Modification Permit No.
                           MD2012-007 and Comprehensive Sign No. CS2012-004 (PA2012-024)
                           4221 - 4225 MacArthur Boulevard   CD 3

Javier Garcia gave a brief overview of the applications for Modification Permit and Comprehensive Sign Program in conjunction with a new commercial shopping center that includes two freestanding buildings and a new driveway access from MacArthur Boulevard. The sign program will establish development parameters for wall signs for the two, multi-tenant commercial buildings, and two on-site monument signs. The modification permit is required to allow an increase in the size/height of one of the freestanding signs to 6 feet, where the Newport Place Planned Community District Regulations limit the height to 4 feet. Mr. Garcia gave a brief history on the Newport Place Planned Community District Regulations and related sign provisions, adopted in the early 1970's. The sign provisions were generally designed to accommodate single tenant entities that generally occupied all or a majority of any of the buildings. It was not foreseen that buildings would later become multi-tenant occupied buildings which would necessitate additional signage to identify more than a single major tenant/entity. Prior to adoption of the Zoning Code Update in November 2010, deviations to the sign provisions of a planned community district were subject to the approval of a modification permit in each case. The updated Zoning Code included provisions that established procedures and criteria to review and approve Comprehensive Sign Programs to accommodate an increase in the size, number, area and location of multiple signs. The proposed sign program generally complies with the standards as apply to wall signs, overall number of signs, area and locations. However, the proposed increase height for one monument sign (two feet taller than allowed), which requires approval of a modification permit.

The applicant, Tod Ridgeway, was in attendance to answer questions from the Zoning Adminstrator and the public.

The Zoning Adminstrator posed the following questions to the applicant with regard to:
- Distance of the monument signs from the street right-of-way property line,
- the distance between the two proposed monument signs,
- and minimum letter height for individual tenants

After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the monument signs would maintain a minimum distance of 10 feet from the property line, maintain minimum spacing of 60 feet between the two monument signs, and minimum letter height of 6 inches. Discussion also revolved around the ability to allow minor deviation from the matrix at a staff level, should Building A be divided into a multi-tenant building. A final question to the applicant was on the identification of the neighboring restaurant use proposed to be included on the monument sign. It was agreed that identification of the restaurant use could be provided on only one monument sign.

The Zoning Administrator opened the public hearing.

Jim Mosher had the following comments:
- On the past Planning Commission meetings regarding high speed traffic on MacArthur Boulevard in regard to the proposed commercial project and the need to attract attention.
- On height and proliferation of monument signs at other locations in the city and their impact on visibility and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Comprehensive sign program is not appropriate at this time and that an amendment to the Planned Community District should be required.
- That the comparison with other commercial shopping centers in the city was not appropriate.

Seeing that there were no other public comments on thie matter, the Zoning Administrator closed the public hearing.

The Zoning Administrator stated that there is a high volume of traffic on the roadway and based on the size of the project and orientation of the buildings there is justification for approval. Also, the size of the signs are not excessive and justify a limitation on the number of tenants on each monument sign to avoid a cluttered look. The signs as proposed for the buildings are consistent with the style of the project. It was also stated that support of the comprehensive sign program was on the basis to allow greater flexibility in the application of the sign regulations of the sign code and that it has been interpreted that the sign code regulations can be applied to Planned Community Districts. However, the Zoning Administrator also amended the proposed Exhibit B to require the monument signs to maintain a minimum distance of 10 feet from the property line, maintain minimum spacing of 60 feet between the two monument signs, and minimum letter height of 6 inches. That the exhibit as amended shall limit the taller monument sign to accommodate the listing of no more than six tenants, and limit the shorter monument sign to no more than two tenants. That Building A deviations to the number of wall signs could be approved at a staff level based on the width of the tenant space, as applies to the tenants of Building B. Finally, that the neighboring restaurant use may be identified on only one of the proposed new monument signs.

The Zoning Administrator, with the above referenced changes to Exhibit B, concurred with the balance of the findings for the approval of the modification permit and the comprehensive sign program.

Action: Approved

4.   **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:**

None.

ADJOURNMENT – The hearing was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

The agenda for the Regular Hearing was posted on May 3, 2012, at 10:35 a.m. on the City Hall Bulletin Board located outside of the City of Newport Beach Administration Building and on the City's website on May 4, 2012, at 10:21 a.m.

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Brenda Wisneski, AICP, Zoning Administrator